

# **HOW TO MAN THE FUCK UP!**



**CHAD HOWSE**

# HOW TO MAN THE FUCK UP!

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## SIMPLE.

*"I mean to make myself a man, and if I succeed in that, I shall succeed in everything else." ~  
James Garfield*

My dad's dad was born and raised in Newfoundland, an island off the eastern coast of Canada. He met his wife, my nana, when he was in high school. Out of high school he went to work. Then they had a son, and then another, and finally a daughter.

My papa worked 3 jobs. He helped build his house, the one they still live in today in a small town on that wonderful island. I just found out he worked 3 jobs this year. He never uttered a word, never spoke about wanting more from life, just about how much he appreciates his children and grandchildren and how bad he wants great grandchildren – I'm currently failing to provide such a legacy for the wonderful man but I'm intent on remedying that.

My mom's dad was born in Italy. He met my nona when they were teens and married her. He worked on the fields, had a few kids, then realized Canada was the land of opportunity, not Italy. He realized this after the war where he fought as a member of the Alpini, Italy's Alpine special forces that got massacred in Siberia. My nono had to do some horrible things in that war that shaped who he'd be for the rest of his life.

He's dead now. What I remember about him were his missing fingers that he lost in the factory where he worked in British Columbia. I remember a bird shitting on his head in Granville Island, then hearing words I'd never heard before both in English and Italian. He wasn't nice, though he was to me. But he worked and saved. He didn't waste nor complain.

The only complaint I've ever heard come out of the old man's mouth is of a soar throat. I've heard that complaint thousands of times. Other than that, not a peep. He found God in his late twenties. Met my mom. Married that sweet woman. Had me and my sister. Worked to provide for his family but also to serve God. He had not clue how to fix a thing, yet almost everything in our home growing up was fixed by him, including the deck and the washrooms, all problems solved thanks to the *'For Dummies'* series of do-it-yourself books.

We didn't have as much as many of my pals had. I gave it to him on a couple of occasions because of that fact. I had to buy my own hockey gear, they got the newest and the best. I was a fucking idiot at times. Yet, he still worked and served and anytime I'd meet one of the guys he'd help be it with their business – he eventually became a business coach – or with their faith, these guys I'd respect because of what they earned or what they had or the businesses they created would tell me that my old man was a great man. Hearing that a few times helped me understand what being a man is.

I've been spoiled. Within my family I've had three archetypes of manliness with three very different stories, outlooks on life, and purposes. The women in my life, my mom, my nona, my nana, are all hard workers. They're sweethearts. They've taught me just as much about what it is to man up as the fellas have.



Each of those men, however, did as what men do.

It isn't sexy. It isn't glamorous. Praise is the furthest thing they'd expect and require to do what they did yesterday again today. It's the smile on their kid's or grandkid's face, the hug from their wife that makes the early morning or the stress of the bills on the table glaring at them, sticking it to them, worth it.

We live in a society where worth is measured by comparison and by popularity. We actually think that our value is measured by what we *have*, not who we are.

*How to Man The Fuck Up* is a book about clarity, purpose, and being a fucking badass as *you* see it.

We'll use examples like my grandparents and my old man. These examples are important because the result of manning up isn't applause; it isn't necessarily admiration or praise. You may not get what you're conditioned to want, which is attention and envy. You will, however, gain control, power, purpose, and respect.

Other men from history like Theodore Roosevelt, Hemingway, Robert E. Lee, Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, and many more, will show us that our reality is both objective and subjective. What you choose to chase in life, for example, is often far safer, easier, and mediocre in comparison to what you ought to pursue. That path you've chosen isn't nearly daring enough. Your goals aren't audacious enough to make you wake up earlier and with more excitement about the day's work.

This is about you and it isn't.

It's about your work, your purpose, the legacy you're going to leave, which, no matter your birthplace, your parents, your color, religion, or ideology, are dependent on what you *expect* to be and do, and what you expect *from* this single life you get as well as the actions you take to rise to those impressive expectations, or the lack of action you take to *remain* within those mediocre expectations.

Mediocrity is a sin. It's an easy path when a more difficult option was available.

We'll root out the sin, call out the coward within us all, and start living to a higher standard, a truer potential.

## CLARITY

*A life without clarity is a life without a singular direction, and when our focus and actions are divided, we cannot live according to our ideal.*

Options are good, but they can also be crippling. Centuries ago our only option was survival. As men this meant waking up every day and entering the dangerous world beyond our cave to find food before bigger, stronger, more dangerous predators found it or found *us*.

We awoke with a single purpose. We became *great* at what that purpose asked of us.

Today our decision-making process is a mess.

Rather than simply deciding what to hunt and where, as odd as it sounds, we have to figure out what to wear. Yes, men actually get out of bed and flip through their clothes trying to solve the conundrum of what they shall adorn themselves in. Then we decide what to eat, usually consisting of foods killed or picked or harvested by other men. This is just our mornings, this has nothing to do with the big picture.

Big picture, we face a sea of options. School or no school? Of the thousands of careers and crafts we can enter and pursue we dabble in many, often never fully settling into *one*.

Options can be crippling.

Rather than deciding once and sticking to something, we float, and this floating can last a lifetime.

We lack assertiveness on our purpose and our daily lives. One thing you need to live a grand life of any kind is some semblance of direction. It's better to choose a single path, to create a firm archetype and set your sites on a static trajectory than it is to spend a life searching.

In her book, *Grit*, Angela Duckworth writes about the necessity to stick to something sometimes even about the desire to find the right fit. She highlights humans from every imaginable line of work and craft, some fell into their purpose, others created it. Few, if any, of the case studies done by researchers of those who are living a purposeful, flourishing life, *searched* for it continuously by jumping from career to career over their lifetime.

When you decide on a path, it's more beneficial to stick to it than it is to have the attention deficit that plagues our culture. We're going to determine what it is to man up within the context of *what you think a great life is*, but then it's on you to decide to stick to it or wander.

This book is simple. I'm extracting the simplest, most actionable ideas from history, from philosophers, and from the archetypes I've laid out for the simple call-to-action that is to *man the fuck up!*

It is a call-to-action. These pages aren't theory. They're not options or suggestions. They're a smack in the face to myself and to any other fella who wants to be better, manlier, tougher, and who wants to do more with his time on the planet.

We'll lay out 3 aspects of what it is to *man the fuck up*, but we'll also look at what *being a man* actually is. It's the foundation of the call to action so we may as well begin there.

# THE MAN

*"A man must stand erect, not be kept erect by others." ~ Marcus Aurelius*

A man's role has never been called into much question nor debated nor a cause for concern until *very* recently.

If you're asked to define *a man's man*, you'll likely have little trouble.

You'll bang off characteristics like self-reliance, dependability, independence, toughness, wisdom, grit, and courage in a man devoid of arrogance or too many words.

That essentially sums him up. So why, then, am I even *writing a chapter* on what a man is?!

It's silly. But it's necessary. This clear definition is being diluted. *Men are being diluted*. To talk about a 'role' for a sex is now seen as offensive even though it's deeply rooted in our evolution as a species, in our biology and genetics and the result of our hormones.

Our societies were built on masculine values. Freedom was won from the same. The toughness that built our buildings, the notion of competition that brought the cream to the crop and innovated and created are now being outlawed in our schools where our seeds are being taught to shun their natural tendency to compete and to thrive off of competition.

It's never been more confusion to be a man.

Should I pay for this lady's dinner or is that 'offensive' (pay for her fucking dinner)? Should I open the door for this lady or is *that* offensive (open the fucking door!)?

Being a man should be the simplest thing in your life. It should be your foundation. It should give you a firm footing so you can move forward and upward daily, and live out the life that your deepest ambitions beg you to live before you kick that proverbial bucket in a hail of gunfire.

I kid, but being a good man and being *good at being a man* are necessary if you're going to live any semblance of a grand existence.

So let's get into it.

## Self-Reliance

*Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles.* ~ Emerson



Don't be swayed by society's fads. Don't be a victim to debt. Learn the skills necessary to take care of yourself and your kin. Learn to hunt and fix things around the house. Acquire the toughness necessary to always be the guy others depend on while never having that same luxury yourself.

It ain't easy, but who cares. It's your role as a man. Simple. Clear-cut. You're here to be depended *upon*, not to depend on others. You're not an island, but you are the foundation that others build their lives upon.

## **Gameness and Courage**

*I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what. ~ Atticus Finch*

Men are the fighters, the warriors, and the hunters in a tribe. To be a man of value before society grew into cities and civilizations meant you had to have the balls to fight.

If you didn't have the balls to go into battle, to put yourself in arm's reach of death, you were useless.

Fighting and warring and hunting used to be different things than they are now. To kill, you had to come within reach of the man you wanted to kill, increasing the likelihood that he'll kill you before you killed him.

Hunting was the same. To kill an animal you had to get close enough that it could possibly kill you.

The balls that both require are unfathomable today. Thousands of men lining up facing one another with nothing but a steel blade in their hands knowing that death was likely yet running forward yelling their battle cry is beyond belief when you look at our coddled culture where safe spaces actually exist, and not 'safe from swords or flying bullets', but opinions that those little bitches find offensive.

Do you have gameness?

When your pal's about to get into a fight do you fade into the crowd, do you turn and run, or do you stand and fight like a man?

What's the point of life if you're not living it with courage, stepping into your fears rather than running away from them? Being a little bitch is avoiding what you're put here to be, what you're expected to do.

I don't have a guy that I call my friend that would fade into the crowd. I *did*, but no longer. Those cowards, with all their great qualities, with the goodness in their hearts, cannot be called true friends if they can't be dependent on when the shit hits the fan and my back's against the wall.

Don't be one of those pussies.

## **Grit and Persistence**

*Humans are creatures of habit. If you quit when things get tough, it gets that much easier to quit the next time. On the other hand, if you force yourself to push through it, the grit begins to grow in you. ~ Travis Bradberry*

Grit is continual persistence over time. It's not quitting. It's not being a little bitch, a whiner, a sissy. Grit is a necessity if you want to live a fruitful life.

If you want money, success, and to create something of value that remains long after you're gone, you need to be gritty.

Most people are poor or broke or unhappy because they quit. And both quitting and persisting are habitual. You can choose which you make a habit, but the habit transfers.

Don't quit. Don't avoid the work that must be done or the challenges that you face. Lick your chops and relish them. The warrior thrives off of challenges and he sees almost everything *as a challenge*.

Be that guy, not the fella constantly searching for the easy path, avoiding the difficult roads that forge great men.

## **Strength**

*"Over-sentimentality, over-softness, in fact washiness and mushiness are the great dangers of this age and of this people. Unless we keep the barbarian virtues, gaining the civilized ones will be of little avail." -Theodore Roosevelt*

Manliness is barbaric. It's strong. It's tough. It's physically stronger than the feminine and that reality shaped what men do, who men are, and their roles within a society and within a family.

Yes, you should be as strong as you possibly can be. Keep working at it. It doesn't have to be an obsession, but real-world strength is a must. A stronger you is a more masculine you. A more masculine you is a better you.

Get in the gym. Stop being soft. Start training and working your ass off.

## **Mastery and Skill**

*If people knew how hard I worked to get my mastery, it wouldn't seem so wonderful at all. ~ Michelangelo*

Gameness allows you to fight. Strength gives you a fighter's chance and a leg up on your weaker opponent. But skill, mastery, this is what makes a great warrior and thus a useful man.

Mastery is necessary in two forms.

1. You need skill in some kind of martial art. A guy needs to know how to fight.
2. There needs to be a skill, a passion, something you love to do that you want to be the best at. This is your purpose, your reason for waking up in the morning. This is the focus of your grit, the thing you're going to stick to day in and day out until you kick the bucket.

A man without a focus in life, without something he wants to be great at, even if that thing is being a garbage man or a plumber or whatever, is a man without purpose.

This form of mastery prevents that foundation we talked about earlier. It results in a weightlessness to our existence, a floating rather than a marching.

Find *something* and dedicate all of yourself to it.

## **Love**

*We Greeks are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without the loss of manliness. ~ Thucydides*

Everything we've covered thus far is used and directed by love. It's the man who loves who kills evil. It's the man who loves who defends the weak. It's the man who loves who lays his life for others, who sets out to destroy those who aim to crush freedom.

That's the masculine love we've gotten away from.

That's the love we needed in Germany when 1,000 women were sexually assaulted by immigrants on New Years on the cusp of 2016. No men were there to defend them. Males were there, but they lacked the love, the grit, the gameness, the strength, and the balls to stand for their women.

Those guys who stood by and watched are scum, they're what we've produced by raising our boys to be effeminate. They're what results when you don't raise us according to our roles, our hormones, our fucking genetics.

Be a man of love and aggression.



## MASCULINITY IS EARNED

*Masculinity is not something given to you, but something you gain. And you gain it by winning small battles with honor. ~ Norman Mailer*

There *is* a difference between the male and the man. The man has earned that moniker by not being a little bitch and by facing the obstacles that come into his life with honor and class, not complaint or entitlement or wishes that things were different.

A man accepts his lot in life and does the best he can to make the most of it every day.

Orison Swett Marden wrote, "This is the test of your manhood: How much is there left in you after you have lost everything outside of yourself?"

These tests are what most people avoid. They're tests, however, that prove who you are to yourself, and they *force* the right action and decision where it wouldn't otherwise come up in a life lived in avoidance.

If you think masculinity is innate, you won't be aware of the tests you face, the forks in the road that determine whether you're strong and just or weak and impressionable.

Earn your manhood, that thing that will help you stay on an honorable path while the rest of the world sees such a characteristic as archaic. You'll be strong, they'll be weak.

## EXTREME ACCOUNTABILITY

*If you could kick the person in the pants responsible for most of your trouble, you wouldn't sit for a month. ~ Theodore Roosevelt*

Imagine the power you gain when you look to assume responsibility for everything in your life.

No longer are others the cause for your problems. No longer are others to blame for your state in life. *You* become the owner of your actions and intentions.

This scares the living shit out of most people because they *want* others to blame. They want to be able to point the finger and say *that* or *he's* responsible for my lack of production or success or value. The winners *want that control*, they want to own who's responsible for their lot in life and anyone with a semblance of a brain has to look no further than the man in the mirror.

Each and every aspect of your life begins and ends with you so far as responsibility is concerned.

You want to man up? Start here.

The change comes from a habitual change in thinking. We've all been conditioned to blame others for things because it's easier, and because that's what others do, even if they're in positions of influence.

Now, what follows is a list. Don't rush through the list. Each thing requires reflection and self-awareness. Which are you doing daily? How can you stop from following that line of thinking?

### **Don't envy.**

Envy is a cancer that eats away at the individual. And most envy is focused on stupid shit, stuff, things, not what people actually do. If you must envy, envy someone's work ethic. Envy their hustle and their tenacity. Envy it because it's what creates that accomplishment you crave. What's wonderful is that you can hustle just as much as they do, persist as long, create as much.

Go. This is accountability.

### **Don't think someone cheated to get where they are.**

This sets you up for failure. If you believe they cheated you can now excuse yourself from the race because you hold yourself to a 'higher standard'. You won't cheat, and that's your excuse for not succeeding. The reality is that most earn, only a few cheat, but selectively choose which evidence you look at.

Choose to, in every aspect of life, see the examples that prove to you that you *can do something*, not the failures or the red herrings, but those who hustle, because anyone can hustle.

When you choose to see life through the eyes of a winner and a warrior you gives yourself the power to do and be anything you want, with the fundamental understanding that the lot of it must be earned.

**Stop thinking that where you came from dictates where you finish.**

To pity yourself is to be a victim. A man *cannot* be a victim, there's just too much riding on his success, and there are too many depending on him to win.

We all get days when we feel down. Be in them, don't run from them, but push through them. You can't have a strong foundation if you pity yourself. You can't rise to the occasion if you feel sorry for yourself.

You can't hold yourself to a higher standard if you don't think your life is under your control.

**Stop thinking you *deserve* anything.**

Technically, we deserve what we have. It may be through hardships or un-just punishment that we get it, but it happened, it is, and thus it's deserved. Typically, though, where we are in life is precisely where we deserve to be.

We either own this or deny it. Owning it demands accountability. Denying it puts the onus on someone or something else.

You know the mindset of a man, of a winner.

**Don't look for an out, someone to blame even if they *deserve* some blame.**

So often we look to point a finger instead of accepting ownership for an event or a mistake or an accident. Sometimes the blame is deserved, but that doesn't mean we should dish it out.

In *every situation* in your life, aim to accept responsibility for *something, anything*, and even use your imagination to figure out ways to be held responsible rather than dishing that responsibility to someone else.

This is tough, but do this in every situation in life. In car accidents, in failings at work, even if it's a group project that went down the shitter because of someone else's mistake, take responsibility for whatever role you could have played to make the project a success.

A man who accepts responsibility is a rarity, as is a man, period.

*Look to* assume responsibility; don't just let it fall into your lap.

## *Man up!*

This part of the book can sound accusatory. The weak among us will get offended, shut the book down and go back to his way of life, the life of a victim.

Unlikely, however, that a guy like yourself who bought a book called *Man the Fuck Up!* won't see such a thing as a challenge. And that's what it is. It's a challenge to see the world through the eyes of a man in charge.

While everyone else *seeks to be victims*, you accept responsibility. When they slither their way through the world in a spineless manner, you stand tall and firm and act with honor no matter the outcome.

The thing about claiming responsibility is that it has to be done whether it's to your benefit or to your detriment. Accepting responsibility is never an easy thing. It often gets you in hot water with your boss or old lady or pals. You're not accepting blame for what others have done, however, you're *looking* for your role in the situation and how you could have done things better. Others are essentially irrelevant.

What this *does show* is that you're in charge. So while you may stand as the one to blame, you're taking a leadership role, and a leadership role on a sinking ship is still better than the fella at fault looking for a place to hide.

History is filled with men who assumed responsibility, initially to their detriment, yet gained so much respect in the process that their men and even their superiors would trust them with anything and in any situation. History is also *not* filled with these men because they're quiet, unassuming. They're men's men, fellas who simply played their role and never looked for the acclaim that the fame whores seek like a vampire bat to blood.

A friend of my old man, now a very successful real estate developer, is a wonderful example of this. As a younger man he took out a loan from the bank to develop a plot of land. The loan was far more than he could pay back so when the deal fell through after all of the loan had been spent preparing the land, he was stuck.

Most would declare bankruptcy. Most would blame the flood or nature that ruined the deal. That went against his code, so over the span of a half a decade he worked any job he could to pay that loan back.

When it came time for another deal he had his sights on, the bank trusted him with anything he wanted, and they still do. It's incredibly easy for him to get a lone from that bank because he assumed responsibility, and though it was initially to his detriment, the guy's now worth millions.

The thing you have to remember, however, is that you are not your reputation, you're your character. You're not what others think of you or what they reward you with or honor you



with. You're not how they applaud you or envy you or even what they trust you with or where they would follow you.

You are your character.

Our society thinks meaning is opinion. So many of us think success is fame and popularity, that it's *what do we have that others covet?* Or *what does that guy have that I want?* That's not meaning or success or value in life, it's weightless, it holds no *real* value. Real value is who you are; it's your character.

A great man isn't necessarily what he's accomplished that others approve of, it's whether he's stuck by his code for his entire life or not. Most people sell themselves short or compromise their values to 'get ahead' or get a leg up, but it's never worth it. When you get the *stuff* you think you want it holds value for a while but it always loses it.

To live for something greater, a set of values, for character, for a pursuit that you're passionate about without having to show everyone or tell everyone how passionate about it you are.

## A HIGHER STANDARD

*You have competition every day because you set such high standards for yourself that you have to go out every day and live up to that. ~ Michael Jordan*

What we expect is often what we get.

That isn't to say that you *expect a lot of money so you get a lot of money*. It's idiotic to think like that.

**Your expectations should fuel your actions.**

So you expect to earn a lot of money and you're willing to do whatever it takes to get a lot of money.

You expect more of *yourself*, you expect to *live at a higher standard*, **you're worthy of millions even before you make millions** because of the work you're doing and the stuff you're creating and the attitude you have.

Most people have minimal expectations. We expect a mediocre life so we provide mediocre effort.

You *have to live by a higher standard*. It doesn't matter what your current standards are, you need to have *more self-control and discipline* and you need to work harder. I'm the same. We can always do more and be more.

Your life is the product that your standards creates.

It isn't relegated to your income or your physique, but how you carry yourself, the adventures you embark on, and even the degree of happiness and 'life' you feel like you're living.

Much of the time these standards are set for you by your family, where you're born, what your teachers thought of you and so forth.

As Tony Robbins notes, "If you don't set baseline standards for what you'll accept in your life, you'll find it easy to slip into behaviors and attitudes and a quality of life that's far below what you deserve."

I disagree with that last part, 'what you deserve'. I think you and I deserve exactly what we expect and put out into the world, the effort, the intelligence, persistence and grit. We get what we give. Our standards don't magically change what we get, they up the ante on what we give, opening us up to new levels of accomplishment.

And that's what all of this is about, accomplishment.

Without accomplishment – and in what field it doesn't matter – you're not going to feel the value and purpose and satisfaction from your days that you will if you're winning.

Are you a winner?

Answer that question with truth. Don't lie to yourself because just because you're not currently a winner doesn't mean you can't become one, but if you don't identify the things holding you back by being truthful to yourself, there's nothing that will save you.

Let's look at something more specific.

## **Finances.**

Saving is something I've had trouble with in the past when it comes to saving in general. If I want to save for a truck or a house or a trip, I'm great at it. But now I'm saving in general. I'm budgeting. I'm identifying a specific savings goal for each month, and I'm easily avoiding expenses that aren't necessary.

I went from non-saver to saver rather quickly, and I've kept it up over a solid period of time.

First, I was real with myself. I sucked at saving. Second, I spent a day changing that reality. I didn't just *think* I was a good saver, I spent a day being extremely frugal, which was evidence I could do it everyday. I then began to think of myself as an extremely frugal guy, one not focused on things or possessions, but creating meaningful content, earning from said content, and being immensely frugal with that money that was earned.

It's been a few years now of this frugality, and what it's brought me is absolute freedom.

No need to buy anything. I'm not a victim to things like debt. I'm free to do and be who I really want to be.

Go through the areas of your life where you want to improve your standards.

## **Style.**

I hate style. It's weird. But it's a reality that first impressions are usually correct, everyone makes them and trusts them, so look like you want to be perceived.

I'm guessing you want to be a guy others look like and at least *think*, 'that guy's got his shit together. I want to work with that guy, for that guy.'

Impressions are important, and how you carry yourself is also important. Old school guys take pride in how they look. Millennials wear their pajamas nearly everywhere.

## **Work.**

How disciplined are you with work and how disciplined to do you want to be?

Go through the list, career, craft, training, physique, health, ambition, adventure (do you want grand adventures but you're just not acting like an adventurer?). Change your standards.

I found myself getting worried about my safety in an upcoming trip to Africa. I'm kinda roughing it, and I'm going hunting with a guide who seems great, but who knows? I found myself being a little bitch. Problem addressed. **The solution was to act and be the guy I write about and am, not the coward I found renting space in my brain.**

Know and identify in writing what you want to be, then up your standard to live as that man *today*. The life you want and the results you want in life don't hang on someone else's actions, they depend on who you are and to what standard you hold yourself.

Go through every area of your life that you'd like to improve and create a mission statement. Identify where you are in comparison to where you want to be, take one action in the right direction, and never stop taking those actions.

This isn't just about manning up, this is an exercise you should have done long ago, it's a matter of the man you're trying to become and the likelihood of you actually getting there.

If you change your standards it becomes likely, if you keep limited beliefs running through your mind and you act in a way where what you deserve isn't what you actually want, you'll remain.

Decide now to expect more.

### *Categories for Raised Standards*

- Finances
  - o Do you spend too much? Don't save enough? Care too much about what others think?
- Wealth
  - o Don't earn enough? Raise your standards/quality of your work, meticulousness, measure everything, over-edit everything, create something great.
- Appearance



- (I hate that this matters but...) Make sure your clothes fit, take pride in how you wear them, dress with simplicity but care for the things you buy, take pride in how you carry yourself, it is important. Fit is the most important thing with style, spend money on a tailor, not necessarily expensive clothes. Quality over quantity. One good pair of jeans is better than 4 ill-fitting ones (work clothes not included).
- Adventure
  - Do you do the things you talk about doing and dream about doing? Or do you let fear and 'reality' get in the way? Think of *one thing* you've always wanted to do, book it now. For me that was Italy for 3 months, now it's hunting in Africa. Make a list. Check those bastards off. It's far better to invest in experiences and your own self-improvement than *stuff*.
- Charity
  - Want to be a guy who makes an impact but you don't give, you're not as generous as you'd like to be? Spend a day, figure out a charity, get on a payment plan, then go from there.
- Spirit
  - Spirit is about *who you are*, not just what you do or what you have. Don't like *who you are*? Think you can be better? I'm in this boat. Read, study great men, study virtues and values and uncompromising men. Then live up to the standard they set out, endure the tougher path in life, the one of honor and virtue. Men to study:
    - Christ – or, in the Bible read Proverbs, no matter your religion, it's a guide to life that's unmatched.
    - Belisarius
    - Robert E. Lee

## EXTREME MANLINESS

*"Life is a storm, my young friend. You will bask in the sunlight one moment, be shattered on the rocks the next. What makes you a man is what you do when that storm comes. You must look into that storm and shout as you did in Rome. Do your worst, for I will do mine!" —The Count of Monte Cristo*

Being a man is a great and rare thing.

What I mean by 'being a man is a great thing' *isn't* that it's easier to be a man, actually, it's far more difficult to be a man than it is to be a mere male or a boy. It's a 'great thing' not just for the individual, but also for a society that depends on men to be men.

Societies where its men are *men* have protectors and leaders and providers. A society where its males aren't men have dependents, they have males who *feel* rather than thinking and who look to others to solve their problems not

What is it to be a man?

A man accepts responsibility for his life, his actions, and the safety of those around him. This is imperative. A guy who blames others for everything gone wrong in his life has no power *over* his life.

A man works hard; he understands that no one has won on anything *but* hard work.

It's a great thing to do manly shit, and I genuinely think it's a must.

So what are the roles of men initially?

We were defenders of and providers for our tribe.

That was basically it. We had to hunt and kill. The initial 'man shit' was just that, we'd venture out into the wild and hunt, and if our tribes were being attacked by another tribe wanting to gain new territory, we'd have to fight and kill.

All of the other man shit has evolved from our initial purpose, and now society's trying to tell our young men that these kinds of activities are archaic or barbaric but they produce them men that protect, provide, and procreate.

Man shit still has to do with learning and exploring.

**Learn how to be self-reliant.**

Rather than hiring someone, do it yourself. Go hiking and camping and hunting. Learn how to fight and defend yourself and your family. Buy a gun and learn how to use it (always the best line of defense).

*Practice being good at being a man rather than just being a good man.*

There are a few aspects to this, you're not only learning, but training, and you're not just training but you're testing yourself. To know is useless if you don't have the skill, and to have the skill is useless if you're not tough enough or gritty enough to endure what life, and especially what a more audacious and daring life will throw at you.

The *more you live*, the further you go in this world, the more your will is going to be tested. You can stay safe within the confines of a monotonous life where you never test yourself nor face your fears, but you know better than that because you understand that to *live* is to grow and growth can't occur staying stagnant. To be more you have to do more, and the tests that daring mightily require of you put you in dangerous and dicey situations that make you wilt or break you and *force you* to become more.

We have business goals. We have an idea of *where* we want to be or what we want to be doing, but we also need adventure goals. We need to be in touch with that aspect of *who we are* that wants to do things a little dangerous. He wants to travel to the unknown, to pursue what most would run from.

This isn't just an important part of being a man, but a *human*, one not kept from life and adventure and living daringly, but one constantly after a better experience.

### *Feel Like a Man*

The email I get from readers most isn't a matter of fitness, but of identity.

We live in a society here in the west that tempers manliness. In school we're told to sit and be quiet, just about the hardest and most out-of-nature thing to have a boy do. We're told to behave, to avoid combat at all costs. The workforce is much the same.

When we get into the workforce, not much changes.

No aggression, no gameness, no courage, no combat. After years and years of living a sedated life we want to break free! We want some danger, something that tests us. We want to build stuff with our hands, hunt and fish our own food and get into the wild, but we have no clue where to begin.

We push this feeling down because we think it's childish. We're in our late thirties or forties or fifties and we realize that we don't feel like a man.

We have *no clue* how important it is to feed this feeling, to fuel it, to give it the sustenance it requires.



Authors are beginning to cover this necessity for men. They're bringing it into the open and giving it credence. John Eldridge, in his wonderful book called *Wild at Heart*, takes a Christian perspective on masculinity. A religion, that at times, has quelled this dangerous masculine energy, he argues, needs to feed it, and feed it by doing manly shit.

In his book, *The Depression Cure*, Steven Ilardi argues that our modern way of life is completely out of tune with our genetic make-up. He sees *proof* that we should once again walk and run for hours a day while hunting and fishing for our food by the complete lack of depression in modern hunter-gatherer cultures.

Depression is a product of society, not of the natural human condition, and men who live a life that makes them fat, feminine, and devoid of the excitement and danger that a more primitive way of life gives us are more likely to experience that debilitating disease.

Enough theory, though. This book is about action, not intention. It's a kick in the ass, but also a guide designed to give very literal steps.

To man up is to stop making excuses. You cannot give *reasons* for your failure, for your feelings, for your lack of *life* in your life, then sit on your ass and do nothing about it.

What follows is a simple list. It's a list taken from my own life, the life of my pals and elders and the tribe we have online of guys helping guys to live better lives. It's a list of shit you've gotta do now, whether you're a former soldier looking to reclaim the badass that you once were, or a fella working a 9-5 not getting the meaning and the purpose you thought you'd have at this stage in your life.

The list is comprised of hobbies and habits. We're not all going to get great meaning from our work – though meaning and purpose from work is something we find *within* the work, it's something we create, not search for by jumping from job to job – but we can use our jobs to fund a great life.

The list is designed both to help you live like a man, with that sense that you *are the man*, but also to acquire the skills that men need to have. So while we've talked about the fact that you can't use excuses, you can't blame others for your plight, and all of the *mindset* aspects to manning up, you still need to feel that fire in your belly and the pride in your heart that comes from living as the badass you were bred to be.

*"We need the iron qualities that go with true manhood. We need the positive virtues of resolution, of courage, of indomitable will, of power to do without shrinking the rough work that must always be done." ~ Theodore Roosevelt*

**Hunt, Fish.**



*Health is a huge aspect of hunting and fishing. Game meat contains more omega 3 fatty acids, which are both great for your testosterone levels and your mental health (a dry brain is 60% fat). But that act of hunting is something that's unmatched. It's the pursuit of sustenance, a spiritual journey, an appreciation for nature and for wildlife that we don't find in our cities.*

*You can't experience a land any better than you can while hunting. You're not going to completely 'get out there' in dangerous and wild corners of the world without a gun on your back or slung over your shoulder. Men have done this activity since day one. Depending on where you live, it's incredibly easy to begin and the camaraderie that's found in the wild is unmatched.*

## **Hike, Camp.**

*We're not bred to be inside all day. We need escapes. We need the loud silence that only nature can offer. We require the struggle of hiking a mountain that never seems to end, filled with false summits that trick us into excitement only to let us down time and time again.*

*We need the noise at night, the games our minds play on us when we're in bear country and we're just about to fall asleep but our brains begin to think of all the ways one of those beasts can consume us. We need fear. We need trial. We need all that nature can give us that civilization takes away from us.*

## **Fight.**

*Fighting and hunting, the two things men have done since day one. There's nothing better than fighting, the feeling of competition, of testing yourself, of seeing what you're made of. When you learn to fight, not matter the discipline, you experience battle not in an emotional state like a child does, but one that's much more calculative. It becomes a chess match not an anger episode.*

## **Travel.**

*Having a perspective based on someone else's experience or opinion is a weak way to live. Yet, that's how many of us form our opinions about people, places, things, and politics. Travel gives us our own perspective. It's also venturing in what's completely unknown to us, our uncharted territory.*

*There is a way to travel, though. On my trips I come across those trying to find themselves, and rarely, those trying to create themselves. When you're trying to find yourself you'll try, say, do anything. When you're creating yourself you have values that dictate what you do. Your values include pushing yourself, wading into your fears, not merely going with the flow.*

*You're traveling not to put a pin on a map but to experience things you can't experience when you're in your hometown. While traveling can be skirting all over the world, it can also mean*

*exploring your own back 40. The key is to get out, to explore, to face things you're not quite sure that you can endure or handle. Traveling doesn't require money, it just requires hunger.*

## **Fix Stuff.**

*My first truck was a lovely, lifted GMC 2500. It was also a lemon. Pre me finding out that it was a lemon I used it to move from one town to another that was supposed to be a 10 hour drive. The truck broken down halfway there and it ended up being a 22 hour drive.*

*In preparation for the trip I bought a bed-extender so I could fit more into the bed. I took a crack at installing it, lost my shit, had to get back to work to calm my mind. While I was working, having just lost my shit at the frustrating proposition of installing a bed-extender, my old man took a crack at it. He was frustrated, I'm sure, but simply saw a problem that needed to be solved.*

*He solved it.*

*Part of being a man and doing manly shit is being self-reliant. The quest to become self-reliant is frustrating and it's not easy, but it is necessary. I got frustrated and needed a change of pace. I was a baby. My old man got frustrated, took a breath, and solved the problem. He was the man.*

*I was a victim to my emotions, he didn't give a fuck about his.*

*Self-reliance ain't easy. That's why most people are dependents. It takes self-awareness and persistence and a venturing beyond your comfort zones.*

*That lesson with the truck was a great one for me. Since then, with the house, opportunities have risen weekly for me to try to fix something, to break through the frustration and learn. I needed that comparable. It's since served me well.*

## **Yard Work.**

*When you run your own business or are involved in some kind of work that's about the craft, time becomes very important. You don't want to give your time to something that takes you away from your pursuit, so things like yard work and house work are usually delegated to someone who knows what they're doing and who does it for a living.*

*I like it in that your priorities are set with this line of thinking and you're using the market, paying a guy who depends on this kind of work. I don't like it because it's not about the time in versus time out, it's about caring for your land, having pride in what you've earned.*

*It's also about the process.*

*We live in a world, a society, and a system where the result of our work isn't always immediate. It's not simple mathematics, and oftentimes the result of our work is creating something for someone else, under their brand or business. Yard work is something very simple. It's working with our hands, how work is meant to be done.*

## **Train.**

*There's an argument that strength is masculine. Thus, the stronger you are the more masculine you are. I agree with this to a point, and only in relation to an individual and their journey or comparable strength.*

*The condition you're in, how fit and strong you are is a good measure of how good at being a man you are because it improves your capacity to protect and provide.*

*A male's capacity for strength over a female is also hormonal. It has to do with our differing sex hormones, which adds credence to the argument. Testosterone increases a male's capacity for strength, thus, taking advantage and using that increased capacity can be argued to make you more of a man.*

*Aside from that, training simply prepares you to persist and endure, it's also required if you want to live and experience life.*

*Life is found in experiences.*

*Experiences become more audacious when you train your body to be able to handle more, go further, dare mightier.*

*Training is some manly shit because it improves both your body and your mind. Going through the motions never cuts it, but when you push yourself physically you're building your body up by first breaking it down and you're doing the same with your mind.*



## YOU'RE NOT A SHEEP. YOU'RE A LION.

*"In a sort of ghastly simplicity we remove the organ and demand the function. We make men without chests and expect of them virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honour and are shocked to find traitors in our midst. We castrate and bid the geldings be fruitful." ~ C.S. Lewis*

Lions do as lions do, sheep as sheep do, and men as men do.

The list we previously went over can easily be passed over as 'stuff', devoid of the 'heart of manliness'. The truth is that the *act* of manliness and the heart and soul of it are one in the same.

A man is more lion than sheep. He's more wolf than cat, more warrior than servant.

No matter your environment, who you are and what you do shouldn't change. A captive lion still kills. As does a tiger and a bear. An elephant still dominates, a croc still lurks dangerously ready to attack, and a sheep still gets slaughtered.

### **To be the man, you have to do as men do.**

Manliness, at its core, is brutish and barbaric. It's also caring and loving. Without the barbaric manliness, the loving is useless.

What man can claim he loves when he cannot bring that love into action as men do, through violence?

It's living in ignorance. Evil exists. Evil men exist. The loving man, thus, must be better at violence than the evil man or the evil man spreads his evil and ideology. For goodness to be victorious, love must show itself in the barbaric virtues of men, both good and bad.

This is what it means to be a good man, but also to be good at *being* a man.

*To be, rather than to seem. ~ Marcus Tullius Cicero*

In his book, *Resilience*, Eric Greitens writes about the delusion that many of us feel concerning courage and preparedness. We all *think* we'll be ready when it comes time to man up, but the evidence says otherwise.

We depend on our habits and our training, not what we *think* we have within.

When the moment comes it will be what you've done that will help you do what you must. Doing manly, 'barbaric' things help form the barbarian we need when the enemy is at the gates.



Manliness is earned. We earn through struggle. We earn through timeless toil, persistent and consistent effort, and grit. We earn manliness in the same manner we earn a million dollars or the perfection of a craft. Though manliness serves us far better than does money or skill. It's the basis for both, the foundation for greatness.

To feel blood dripping from your nose, pain in your fists, an ache in your back from the constant and persistent climb of a hunt, this is what it is to be *doing as men do*.

To tend to your home and to your yard, to care for your children and your wife, to provide and protect and procreate, this is being good at being a man.

Do this stuff not to be good. Do it to feel alive. I didn't start travelling until I was in my mid-twenties. Since then I've travelled solo to South America, South Africa, a few countries in Europe, Costa Rica, and all over Canada and the United States. Why? Not to party or to put a pin on a map, but to test myself, to alter my zones of comfort.

## No One Cares. Work Harder.

*"And a man, a man provides. And he does it even when he's not appreciated, or respected, or even loved. He simply bears up and he does it. Because he's a man." —Breaking Bad*

We live in a society where our happiness and self-worth are dependent on the opinions of others or on our *perception* of their opinions. We do things, think a certain way, buy *stuff* we don't really need simply to improve what we think others think about us.

We want to beat them in an imaginary game of acquisition.

The truth?

No one cares. No one's watching.

Work because you love the process of working.

Stop complaining because a complaint automatically makes you the victim in the situation.

Think bigger because what you set out to do is your choice, not the choice of a system or the environment you were born into.

Do what's difficult because you'll be one of the few willing to do it. You'll also be one of the *very few* to benefit from taking responsibility over your life, control over your emotions, and a grasp on your destiny.

This is the essence of what it means to man up.

It isn't a matter of looking down on yourself because you're not where you can be, it's inspiring to see that, even with who you are now, the man you are now, your toughness, grit, and ambition, you can still be more, do more, live a more audacious and daring life.

## FINAL TASK

*A journal is evidence for how far you've come, but also a source of clarity for where you are.*

Write.

Write down your code, the thing that you hold yourself to, your standards.

Write down your struggles with your code, your moments of weakness, and leave them on the paper in front of you. *Do not* let them run your life.

The final task is to get a journal and keep track.

You'll find clarity and solutions to those weak moments we all have when victimhood seems so alluring. The clarity always has to be to act like a man.

Pick one up, start writing.

Here are a couple options for expediency:

1. The journal I use to write down all of my expenses and earnings:

Note.

2. The journal I use to write down my thoughts, solutions:

Moleskin.

3. The journal *system* I use to find clarity in my purpose, days, and in business:

The Perfect Day Formula.

*2 Requests:*

*1. You have to write 3 things you're thankful for that happened within the last 24 hours.*

This is *insanely* important and pertains to our mission within this book. When you see life through the eyes of someone who's grateful for what they have, who they are, and who they have in their lives, you can't help but be a guy who makes the most out of every situation.

This is what it means to man up. You're not a victim. You're not pitying yourself or your plight. You're not pouting and being a baby. You're seeing with very specific examples, what a great life you have.

It's invigorating. It brings excitement to life, an appreciation that's all-to-often lost on a comparison-culture that seems to only exist in relation to someone or something else.

*2. When you write about your perfect, ideal day in the future, where you have the work you want to do, the home, the family life, also write a separate perfect day, one that exists with what you have right now.*

We get too caught up in setting *future* goals that we don't see how we can create perfection in the present.

No matter what you want in life or where you want to be, it's dependent on what you do *now*, so what does your ideal look like *right now*?

What's your ideal wake-up time?

What time do you work out at?

What do you eat?

What are your thoughts?

Write down your perfect day as if it were going to happen tomorrow. You're not dependent on having anything you don't already have. It's a possibility, something you can create daily that would make your life a hell of a lot more effective.



## MOVING FORWARD.

As a part of this book you gained access to the Average 2 Alpha Tribe. This is much more than just a program or a diet or anything else you've been a part of or I've created.

There are 3 aspects to the tribe...

Body, business, mind.

We're using the gym, using *the best* training methods and nutrition plans to build a stronger body and a stronger mind. The training method takes into account *your current strength levels*, and tells you exactly what you should be lifting, making *every workout* a challenge.

Can you live up to who you should be?

We're also delving into business, both how to earn a living – or extra money – from simply writing about, talking about, filming, what you love to do. This can be a hobby, a passion, or a full-blown career. We also talk money-management, investing, and how to start a business.

The real meat, however, is the 12 virtues we go into that every man must possess to be at his best.

*What you want in life is dependent on who you are.*

The internet, book stores, they're all filled with literature that help you accomplish *things*. They show you tactics and steps to get better at 'a' or 'b' but fail to focus on the man that 'a' or 'b' is dependent on.

This hit me a few years ago responding to emails that I get daily about how to improve in x, y, or z. The easy answers are always do this or that, but the *best answer*, the one that will create *real, lasting* improvement, have to do with *who you are* and the code you live by more than any skill you may possess.

John Wayne has a famous line:

*A man's gotta have a code, a creed to live by.*

I've always agreed with the statement, but I've never had a firm code to fall back on in times to uncertainty, moments of weakness, or periods of intense tribulation.

And I grew up with amazing parents and grandparents. I figured if *I don't have a firm code*, then a lot of guys don't have a firm code to live by.

The 12 virtues we go over in A2A are that code. Each is designed to make you better, stronger, tougher, manlier. You're going to come out of Average 2 Alpha as the rock your family and your society needs you to be, but also the man your grand goals depend on.

Every month we go over a different virtue and a corresponding challenge for that virtue. This *will push you* to become the man you can be and should be, but I know you're up for the challenge.

So pay close attention to your emails!

Anything with [A2A] in the subject line is for your eyes only, and is necessary for this awesome path you're about to embark upon.

We'll be talking soon.

*Be Legendary,*  
Chad Howse